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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; October 14, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

Chosun Ilbo, Segye Ilbo, All TVs
Koreas to Hold Talks on Flood Prevention Today

JoongAng Ilbo
ROK Military Poorly-Equipped Due to Lack of Money

Dong-a Ilbo
ROKG Stays Cool amid Latest N. Korea Missile Launches

Hankook Ilbo
"Dialogue Mood" Sets in between Two Koreas

Hankyoreh Shinmun
Ruling Camp Considers Revising Sejong City Project to Make Sejong a City Equipped with Green Growth Industries, Educational and Research Facilities

Seoul Shinmun
"Two-Faced N. Korea:" N. Korea Accepts Seoul's Proposal for Talks One Day after Test-firing Missiles

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

According to the Unification Ministry, North Korea has accepted Seoul's proposal for inter-Korean talks this week over flood prevention and humanitarian issues. The North's latest conciliatory gesture comes one day after it test-fired five short-range missiles off its east coast. (All)

According to an ROKG source, the ROK military is on the alert for more North Korean short-range missile tests after the North declared a navigation ban also in the West Sea. (Chosun, Dong-a, Segye, Seoul)

The ROKG yesterday refrained from making an official response to North Korea's Oct. 12 missile launches. This move seems to have come out of consideration of the upcoming working-level talks with North Korea slated for today and tomorrow. (Dong-a, Seoul)

U.S. NASA Chief Charles Bolden, Jr. said at the International Astronautical Congress in Daejeon that future cooperation with the ROK would be possible in such areas as lunar exploration, satellites and the field of aeronautics. (Chosun, Hankyoreh, Segye)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, during an Oct. 13 press conference in Russia, said "We have absolutely no intention of relaxing or offering to relax North Korean sanctions at this point whatsoever." (Chosun, all TVs)

MEDIA ANALYSIS

-N. Korea

Conservative Chosun Ilbo and all TV networks gave coverage to Oct. 13 press remarks in Russia by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in which she said: "We have absolutely no intention of relaxing or offering to relax North Korean sanctions at this point whatsoever."

North Korea's acceptance yesterday of Seoul's proposal for inter-Korean talks over flood prevention and humanitarian issues received wide press attention. Most media noted that this conciliatory North Korean gesture came one day after it test-fired

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five short-range missiles off its east coast, and criticized the North's two-faced attitude of conducting missile tests while at the same time seeking negotiations.

Most media also reported that the ROK military is on the alert for more North Korean short-range missile tests after the North declared a navigation ban also in the West Sea. A ROKG source was quoted as saying: "Although there are no concrete signs of preparations for missile tests yet, we're watching closely in the West Sea."

The ROKG's low-profile response to North Korea's Oct. 12 missile launches also received wide press attention. An ROK Foreign Ministry official was quoted: "The North's missile launch was a violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1874, but we have no plan to make an official announcement."

Most newspapers observed that this ROKG move is in stark contrast to its reaction after Pyongyang's July 4 launch of one short-range and six mid-range missiles over the East Sea, and seems to have come out of consideration of the upcoming working-level talks with North Korea slated for today and tomorrow.

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized: "UN sanctions against North Korea have been undermined by China's recent offer of massive aid to North Korea. ... In this situation, the ROKG is also considering providing the North with 10,000 to 30,000 tons of rice. ... If we pull the teeth out of the sanctions against North Korea even before starting talks with North Korea, we cannot reach the goal of denuclearizing North Korea."

OPINIONS/EDITORIALS

CO2 EMISSIONS AND GDP
(Dong-a Ilbo, October 14, 2009, page 38)

By Editorial writer Park Yeong-kyun

Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels announced Oct. 2 that 1,000 U.S. mayors signed an agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with Kyoto Protocol standards. The mayors urged the U.S. federal and state governments to cut greenhouse gas emissions seven percent from 1990 levels by 2012. In 2005, Seattle cut CO2 levels eight percent and Los Angeles seven percent from 1990 levels. The U.S. has been

criticized for its lukewarm effort to cut such emissions, but the amount of greenhouse gases reduced due to voluntary efforts by state governments is equivalent to that of the European Union and Japan.

In the growth rate of CO2 emissions since 1990, the ROK ranked first among member nations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. According to the International Energy Agency, the ROK's CO2 emissions in 2007 jumped a whopping 113 percent from 1990, the highest growth in the OECD. The country also remained the world's ninth-largest greenhouse gas emitter between 2006 and 2007, following China, the U.S., Russia, India, Japan, Germany, Canada and Britain.

It makes sense that CO2 emissions increase when GDP increases because of (the effect of) economic growth. Economic growth explains why China, dubbed "the world's factory," has become the world's largest CO2 emitter and why other emerging economies such as Russia and India rank high on the list. The ROK is different, however. Korea's nominal GDP ranked 11th in the world in 2003 but fell behind those of India, Brazil, Russia and Australia to drop four notches to 15th place in 2007. Nevertheless, the level of ROK's CO2 emissions has remained unchanged because its economy is heavily dependent on manufacturing, which uses coal and produces a large amount of carbon emissions.

At this year's U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, global leaders will discuss the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions after 2013. The ROK is highly likely to be subject to mandatory caps on emissions. At a U.N. climate conference last month, leaders of

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major economies such as the U.S., China and India promised to cut emissions. The European Union announced a cut of 20 percent and Japan 25 percent from 1990 levels and the U.S. 17 percent from 2005 levels. The ROK has suggested three scenarios: increasing greenhouse gas emissions no more than eight percent; a stop to a further rise of emissions; or a cut of four percent from 2005 levels. Yet just a few years are left before 2013. The ROK must urgently pursue a green growth strategy contributing to reducing CO2 emissions.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

USING IMJIN RIVER TALKS TO SHIFT N. KOREA POLICY
(Hankyoreh Shinmun, October 14, 2009, page 35)

This week, a group of meetings is scheduled between South Korean and North Korean authorities. They have agreed to hold working-level talks in Kaesong on Wednesday in order to prevent a reoccurrence of the Imjin River flood disaster, and a Red Cross working-level meeting on Friday. Apart from the Red Cross talks, where matters such as reunions for separated families during the Chuseok holiday and humanitarian aid to North Korea were discussed, this is the first time in over three months that authorities from the two countries have met directly. The third set of working-level talks in July which discussed issues pertaining to economic collaboration on the Kaesong Industrial Complex was the last time the two countries met. This is the first positive news in some time for people concerned that North Korea's relations with the U.S. and China are advancing ahead of its relations with the ROK.

When the ROK proposed these talks and a schedule, North Korea accepted immediately without modifications. This is another indication of North Korea's active determination to improve inter-Korean relations that has been sustained continuously ever since the mourning delegation's visit to pay their respects at the memorial service of late President Kim Dae-jung in Aug. It also coincides with Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao's statement at the second trilateral leaders' meeting of China, the ROK and Japan on Saturday, when he remarked that North Korea's intent to improve inter-Korean relations was the strongest sense he felt during his visit to North Korea.

On the other hand, although the ROK first proposed the dialogue, it

still seems that it delayed too long in setting the meeting. One cannot erase the sense that authorities waited and failed to take action following the Imjin River flood disaster, when talk was rife about the need for inter-Korean dialogue to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future, and were only compelled to take action after China's strong urging to engage in dialogue. The status and level of the dialogue also appear to be merely working-level and casual, in contrast to the actions of North Korea, the U.S. and China, which are taking the first steps in the broader scheme of things toward a solution for the North Korean nuclear issue through dialogue.

There are important matters to address at the Imjin River talks. Responsibility for the disaster needs to be clearly established, and a plan needs to be set in place so that the incident is not repeated. At the Red Cross talks, it is important to stress that separated family members who do not have long to live should be allowed to meet and not be forced to wait for a holiday or special occasion, and that food aid would be provided to North Koreans suffering from starvation. North Korea, for its part, should not simply make demands, but give an explanation and express its remorse for its role in the Imjin River disaster.

The list of matters to discuss, however, should not stop there. As inter-Korean relations remain stagnant, North Korea and China are rapidly growing closer in political and economic terms. While the ROK is focusing only on sanctions against North Korea, its ability to make its voice heard on issues related to the Korean Peninsula is growing weaker. Without an improvement in inter-Korean relations, it

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will be difficult for us to play a greater role in regional affairs.

We hope the Lee Administration uses this series of talks as an opportunity to affect a major shift in its North Korea policy.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

1N. KOREA IS BACK ON TOP OF ITS GAME

(Chosun Ilbo, October 14, 2009, page 39)

North Korea fired five short-range missiles from its eastern coast on Monday capable of hitting targets 120 km away. The missiles pose one of the greatest threats to the ROK. North Korea also declared an area off South Pyongan Province in the west off-limits to ships, which suggests it is preparing to fire missiles from its western coast as well.

From April to July, North Korea fired a total of 18 missiles and conducted one nuclear test. For three months after that, it appeared to have calmed down. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, who visited Pyongyang early this month, told President Lee Myung-bak and Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, "This is the time to talk to North Korea." But now the North has conducted another series of missile tests even before the echo of Wen's comments had gone silent.

The missile tests violate UN Security Council resolutions. UN sanctions against North Korea have been undermined by China's recent offer of massive aid to North Korea. In this situation, the ROKG is also considering providing the North with 10,000 to 30,000 tons of rice. At this point, who is in a position to call for additional sanctions against the North for violating the UN resolutions?

The ROKG said the missile tests could be part of North Korea's efforts to improve the range of the missiles. In other words, the latest missile launches may not be attempts by North Korea to pressure the ROK, the U.S. and the international community. The U.S. is trying hard to ignore the tests, apparently because Washington wants to minimize the impact and continue in an atmosphere of dialogue.

Even countries that are at war with each other hold talks. What matters is their purpose. Sanctions and dialogue are both part of the two-pronged strategy to get North Korea to abandon its nuclear

weapons program. Sanctions alone will not be effective, and talks will not be able to end the nuclear standoff. The key lesson from past disasters is that sanctions and dialogue must be pursued together.

But if we pull the teeth out of the sanctions against North Korea even before starting talks with North Korea, we cannot reach the goal of denuclearizing North Korea. The situation has deteriorated to this level because the ROK, the U.S., China and Japan have all either taken individual steps to talk with North Korea or have taken part in measures that weaken UN sanctions without agreeing on a concerted strategy.

As if nothing had happened, only a day after its missile launches North Korea accepted an ROK proposal for talks to control the release of water from dams along the Imjin River and to discuss additional reunions of separate families. Pyongyang has regained control of the situation.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

1N. KOREA'S DUAL ATTITUDE

(JoongAng Ilbo, October 14, 2009, page 46)

Inter-Korean talks will take place starting today to discuss ways to prevent damage from flooding at the Imjin River. The ROKG proposed talks with North Korea two days ago and North Korea accepted the

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offer in one day. The talks will be working-level but will carry significance in that inter-Korean talks, which have been stalled for almost two years, will resume. However, North Korea launched five short-range missiles over the East Sea on the same day that the ROKG proposed the talks. This violates the UN Security Council Resolution that bans test-firing of ballistic missiles. It seems that North Korea fired the missiles in response to the two-track policy by the ROK, the U.S. and Japan to pursue both pressure and dialogue at the same time to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue.

North Korea is making deliberate moves to leverage its bargaining position prior to talks with the U.S. We need to understand North Korea's intentions properly in order to respond to them effectively.

We assume that North Korea has agreed to the inter-Korean talks based on its judgment that talks with the U.S. will not go smoothly unless tensions on the Korean Peninsula abate. This assumption seems reasonable in that North Korea agreed to talk with the ROK on agenda items that include the North's apology for the unannounced discharge of the Hwanggang Dam and measures to prevent recurrence of such an incident. (Previously) the North would not have easily accepted these agenda items as topics for discussion even when there was a thaw in inter-Korean relations. In the same vein, North Korea agreed to hold talks focused on arranging reunions of families separated by the Korean War. Whatever their motive, North Korea's willingness to discuss the agenda is a positive sign. We hope that this will facilitate further inter-Korean talks and pave the way for inter-Korean issues to be settled quickly. In addition, we urge North Korea to work on ways to resolve the nuclear issue at the inter-Korean talks.

North Korea's intentions behind the missile launches appear much more complicated. The KN-02 missiles North Korea fired this time are an updated version (of the Russian SS-21.) Analysts say that the missiles will strike not only the metropolitan area and Pyeongtaek naval base but also Pyeongtaek's U.S. military bases, which are currently under construction. It seems that North Korea intended to put military pressure on the ROK and the U.S. by displaying improved missile capabilities. North Korea wanted to prove that joint U.S.-ROK military forces would not be able to easily respond to its missile launches because its missiles use solid fuel and are fired from mobile launchers. North Korea also seemed to have a political intention to gain a stronger bargaining position in talks with the U.S. North Korea apparently is seeking to become more insistent in its demands while the U.S. is expected to

focus on the North's nuclear dismantlement. North Korea is calling on the U.S. to shift its antagonistic policy toward the North. In this regard, North Korea is directly targeting the alliance between the ROK and the U.S. North Korea is likely to demand that the U.S. back off its commitment to extend a nuclear umbrella over the ROK and that the U.S. pull its forces out of the Korean Peninsula in return for the North accepting U.S. demands. This is what the ROK should be most cautious about.

Whatever motives North Korea has, we should rein in the situation according to our objectives and plans. We should devise ways to maximize our national interest by considering many factors such as inter-Korean relations, North Korea-China relations, ROK-U.S. relations and U.S.-North dialogue. To this end, we should take action strategically and promptly based on the rational and careful judgment without being swayed by the fast-changing situation. The ROKG's capability in diplomacy and security will be tested from now on.

FEATURES

"OBAMA EFFECT;" WIND OF RECONCILIATION BLOWING AROUND THE GLOBE
(JoongAng Ilbo, October 14, 2009, Page 14)

By Reporter Nam Jung-ho

Way to a World beyond Borders

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Although there is some controversy over U.S. President Barack Obama's winning of the Nobel Peace Prize, it is true that a "balmy breeze of reconciliation" started to blow in every corner of the world. Obama's style of "Smart Power" - a policy under which the U.S. breaks with unilateralism and uses a proper combination of military power and diplomatic resolutions - is changing the global atmosphere. This is the result of Obama's efforts toward the "world beyond our border," which is stated in his book, "The Audacity of Hope."

Since his inauguration, President Obama traveled more than any of his predecessors. Consequently, as the world is trying to go beyond barriers of race, ideology, and power struggle and resolve issues through dialogue, the global map of foreign relations is changing.

Thaw in Conflict Areas

First of all, the situation regarding North Korea's and Iran's nuclear proliferation, which deteriorated under former George W. Bush's hard-line policy, has changed. The North Korean nuclear issue has entered into a phase of dialogue, although it is conditional on the beginning of U.S.-North Korea bilateral talks. Iran also said that it will accept international inspection of its uranium enrichment facilities.

Another significant progress is the U.S.-Russia agreement on nuclear arms reduction. Under the leadership of President Obama, the U.S. and Russia agreed to reduce their nuclear warheads from the current 6,000 to 1,500-1,750. In addition, efforts are undergoing to improve relations with Cuba and Venezuela, countries which the U.S. had classified as its enemy states until recently. Since President Obama has also been emphasizing "engagement with enemies," hopes of a thaw in relations with these countries are being raised.

"Smart Power" Diplomacy

Many observers say that Obama's many achievements in just eight months in office are directly related to his foreign policy philosophy. Above all, he is opposed to U.S. unilateralism based on military power. He believes that the U.S. should gauge the opinion of every nation before building a global consensus and then make a joint response.

This belief is clearly set out in his book, "The Audacity of Hope."

In the book, he argued, "It will almost always be in our strategic interest to act multilaterally rather than unilaterally when we use force around the world." Therefore, he prefers the "Smart Power" diplomacy - using a proper mixture of military power and diplomatic negotiations.

U.S. Approval Ratings Soaring

The global image of the U.S., which worsened after wars broke out in Afghanistan and Iraq following the September 11 terrorist attacks, has improved noticeably since President Obama took office. Coupled with the popularity of the first U.S. African-American President, a change in the U.S. attitude won a favorable response especially from Europe.

A recent Pew Research Center survey found that favorable views of the U.S. jumped from 31 percent in 2008 to 64 percent this year in Germany; 33 percent to 58 percent in Spain; and 42 percent to 75 percent in France. The same trend was also shown in Middle East countries, such as Egypt and Jordan.

Challenges ahead

It cannot be said, however, that there are no knotty problems for Obama. Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are the biggest concern. During his presidential campaign, Obama pledged to pull out troops (from the region). However, Obama is concerned that if the U.S. withdraws its troops, both conflicts could degenerate into "failed wars." Therefore, the question of how to wrap up the wars in

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Afghanistan and Iraq, which are still claiming many lives, is expected to serve as a test for Obama's foreign policy.

STEPHENS